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ABSTRACT

A discussion is presented on the education of Japanese teachers, their roles in the schools, and proposed reforms in their education. In describing the pre-World War II background of teacher education in Japan, three ideological forces are discussed: Western thought that impacted upon early Meiji reforms, Confucianism, and nationalism. Western influences were once again predominant in the post-war period. The development of preservice and inservice education since 1945 is traced and patterns of change in curriculum and entry into the profession are noted. Particular emphasis is placed upon the role of the teacher in Japanese schools and society, and the cultural and moral values and expectations that shape them. In considering proposals to reform teacher education, it is pointed out that two factors are most significant in the current reform movement. One is economic, the other social, but both are integral to the political concerns of the Japanese government. Sixty-two endnotes are provided. (JD)

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Teacher Education in Japan

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Teacher Education in Japan

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, Japanese society has relied on formal education to develop character, cultivate moral and cultural sensitivity, and, indeed, advance industrialization and modernization. The Japanese belief that teachers should inclusively enhance the instrumental, moral, and expressive aspects of their children's formation has become so deeply entrenched in that tradition that it has become a virtual cultural expectation--one that has shaped the evolution of teacher training itself.

Before 1945, teacher training progressed according to various successive influences: the Western orientation of the early Meiji period later gave way to the Confucian ideology, which, itself, subsequently yielded to the nationalistic pressures of militarism. After 1945, teacher education was guided by the first United States Education Mission's recommendations on educational reform. In this paper I will discuss the education of Japanese teachers, their roles in the schools, and proposed reforms in their education. I will dwell upon teachers' roles to allow the reader to appreciate better how reformers want to improve them in the 1980s.

TEACHERS ON TRIAL: PROLOGUE

Today teachers hold respectable positions in Japanese society. Although teaching has long been a comparatively attractive profession, its appeal has heightened during the past decade, and

entry has become more competitive. Every year more than 200,000 applicants compete for fewer than 40,000 positions in the public school system. In 1985 graduates fresh from colleges and universities filled 59 percent of the available positions. The remaining 41 percent were filled by applicants switching to new careers and by shushoku ronin, or the previous year's graduates who had failed the appointment examination on their first attempt. This unprecedented competition for teaching jobs has grown somewhat analogous to the now familiar competition for admission to colleges and universities. And one need not seek far for the reasons. Teachers earn much more than other public employees, and their salaries compare favorably with salaries in the private sector. Furthermore, their employment is assured for a lifetime.

On the debit side, teachers take a lot of criticism from the public for inadequacies. That the public view of teachers is predominantly critical is clearly reflected in the extensive debate on teacher education throughout the postwar period. Teachers are frequently held responsible for the increasing incidents of violence and bullying in schools; these matters are social and political and extensively reported in the mass media. Some reformers in the 1980s even believe that most social problems in the schools could be eliminated if teachers were to receive better pre-service education (1). Teachers' inability to deal effectively with those problems often leads to fatigue, depression, and even suicide. From 1978 to 1981, for example, 387 teachers committed suicide (2).

Today society's reliance upon teachers is obviously as high as it

was in the past. This reflects the group-oriented Japanese culture, in which teachers are assumed to play culturally compatible and inclusive roles. First of all, teachers are responsible for developing students' personalities. Hence teachers make a great effort to instill what are usually identified as "fundamental living habits" into their students at all levels. Secondly, Japanese teachers are expected to be the primary agent for not only transmitting culture, but also developing student motivation to do school work. Thirdly, society's broad reliance upon teachers flows from the fact that schooling in Japan is intense and central to the lives of both primary and secondary students. The centrality of schooling in students' lives finds its expression in the public view of the school as a moral community. Each school is expected to maintain a high moral standard, and this standard is subject to public scrutiny. The centrality of schooling also manifests itself in the school's critical responsibility for promoting high academic standards. High academic attainment is essential for success in the high school and university entrance examinations, a functional centerpiece of the school system.

In brief, Japanese society's predominant dependence on its teachers contributes to their respectful cultural image, but simultaneously subjects them to constant criticism.

TEACHER EDUCATION PRIOR TO 1945: BACKGROUND

The history of teacher education in Japan parallels the evolution of that society as a nation state from its inception in the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Teacher education began as part of

the Japanese modernization early in the Meiji period. The first comprehensive plan for establishing a national school system was laid out in 1872. It was in that year that the first normal school was founded in Tokyo by the Department of Education, the precursor of the Ministry of Education.

Marion M. Scott, an American teacher who was initially invited to Japan to teach English, was appointed as instructor of the school for three years (3). Using instructional methods and materials then current in the United States, he was responsible for teaching 24 teacher trainees chosen from various prefectures. He divided the 24 students into six groups, each of which was responsible for instructing a group of 15 pupils during the practice session; these pupils were enrolled in a school attached to the normal school (4). While teacher trainees received instruction in English, they practiced teaching in Japanese. Admission to the school required that applicants be at least 20 years of age and that they pass the entrance examination. This inception of teacher education in early Meiji Japan typifies the initial educational development, in drawing upon the Western experience while searching for advanced models of schooling. It goes without saying that Western influence on Japanese teacher education continued to be significant during the 1870s.

By 1876, just four years after the Tokyo normal school had been established, 94 other normal schools were founded throughout the nation by the Department of Education. Among them were women's normal schools, the first of which was operating as early as 1874.

Students were required to enroll in normal schools for two years, and they studied such subjects as Japanese history, composition, geography, physical education, physics, arithmetic, and calligraphy. Normal school was considered "the place" where students were trained to become shihan, an exemplar for elementary pupils (5). But interestingly, moral education was never part of the normal school curriculum during the early Meiji period.

In 1880 when the nation's second school reform occurred, Confucian influence began to supersede the Western orientation of the early Meiji era (6). Confucianism rose in response to what was thought to be the excessive Westernization of Japan; that is, indiscriminate exposure to Western thought and civilization was considered to have deteriorated the moral fabric of Japanese society. Confucian ideology in education was enhanced first by Motoda Nagazane, the imperial lecturer who drafted Kyogaku Seishi, the Imperial Will on the Great Principles of Education, to build the moral basis of the imperial system. It stressed the concepts of loyalty to the imperial state and filial piety as the moral foundation of education. Kyogaku Seishi underscored the urgency of instilling Confucian ethics in the minds of elementary school children (7). As a result, the government adopted it as a guiding framework for educational policy. Thus the Department of Education rushed to print the first moral education textbooks composed of famous adages from traditional Eastern classics illustrative of Confucian thought. In 1881 it also issued an ethical guide for elementary school teachers that defined the teacher's role in

promoting Sonno Aikoku, reverence for the Emperor and patriotism through moral education. To promote moral education further, the government distributed to local schools copies of Essentials of Primary Instruction, a textbook edited by Motoda outlining 20 moral principles (8).

In 1883 the national standards for training teachers were established, and they placed greater emphasis on Confucian ideology. In 1886 Arinori Mori, first education minister, issued the normal school order that created the foundations of pre-World War II teacher education in Japan (9). He viewed education as an instrument of nation-building that would contribute to the enhancement of what was regarded as his obsession, Japan's international status. Mori underscored the importance of teacher education because he believed teachers would play a central role in training the human resources the nation needed (10). The training of character and the uniform development of cognitive and motivational orientation toward the state were brought into prominence in teacher education under his policy. "Attention," the normal school order stressed, "ought to be paid to ensuring that the students are those possessing a good and obedient, faithful, and respectful character" (11). All teacher trainees were housed in dormitories for the entire period of training so that they might achieve uniformity in their character development and might be supervised closely. This character training became a major characteristic of teacher education thereafter, part of the ethos of Japanese normal schools.

In 1897 the Ministry of Education issued the teacher education order that created three types of teacher training: normal schools, women's normal schools, and higher normal schools. Both normal schools and women's normal schools required four years of training for higher elementary school graduates. Entrance into higher normal schools, on the other hand, required graduation from normal school, and the training was for three years. The primary goal of the normal school was to train elementary school teachers, whereas the higher normal school was designed to provide teachers for normal schools and middle schools. Teacher education was further reformed in 1919, 1924, and 1932. In 1929 Tokyo and Hiroshima Bunrika Colleges (teachers colleges) were established to offer advanced studies in education for graduates of higher normal schools (12). Training at the normal school level was expanded to five years for higher elementary graduates and from one to two years for students who graduated from middle school. In 1938 the Education Council recommended the further upgrading of the normal school to the level of professional school, which required graduation from middle school and training for three years. The recommendation was implemented in 1943.

Under growing militarism, in 1941 the government promulgated the national school order based on the Education Council's recommendation to emphasize training for the imperial subjects. The order clearly reflected the underlying nationalistic ideology of education under militarism. The aims of schooling were defined as follows: "The aims of the National School are to carry out

elementary general education in accordance with the Imperial Way and to provide our people with the basic training required of Imperial Subjects" (13). Schooling had changed to an inclusive process of behavioristic and motivational training and acquisition of practical knowledge requisite for the promotion of the imperial state. Group training was the method employed to implement the process. In contrast, individual freedom in schooling was rejected and judged inimical to the goals of the national school. Under this order teacher education was designed to train future teachers who could promote the Imperial Way through schooling.

To summarize, in the pre-World War II period the development of teacher education was dictated by the succession of three ideological forces: Western thought that impacted upon early Meiji reforms, Confucianism, and nationalism. The character training of future teachers was of the utmost importance and militaristic and it took precedence over the intellectual development of teacher trainees.

TEACHER EDUCATION SINCE 1945

There is an interesting parallel between Meiji and postwar education reforms: both reforms were considerably influenced by Western educational systems. But the Meiji reforms were carried out under the initiatives of Meiji leaders, and the postwar reforms were imposed and implemented under the close supervision of the Occupation (14). Like teacher training in the early Meiji period, postwar teacher education was based on an American model. The United States Education Mission invited to Japan in 1946 by the

Occupation authorities, presented a framework for educational reforms that profoundly influenced the development of education for teachers. The Mission's recommendations read:

> The reorganized normal schools, all more nearly at the level of the higher normal schools, should become four-year institutions; they would continue general education and provide adequate professional training for teachers in elementary and secondary schools (15).

The recommendations became the basis for the development of a general principle of postwar teacher education, which includes three basic components: general education, studies in specialized fields, and professional education (16). The Education Reform Committee, established in 1946, was charged to make proposals for comprehensive educational reforms on the basis of the Mission's recommendations.

The Education Reform Committee recommended that teacher education be placed within the university system, unlike prewar teacher training, which was conducted in a separate system, and that independent teacher colleges be developed to prepare teachers at the elementary and lower secondary levels (17). This recommendation led to the Ministry of Education's policy of establishing at least one national university in each prefecture with a faculty or department responsible for teacher education. The purpose of teacher education at a university is to provide students with broad liberal arts education, as well as specialized preparation, which was lacking in the programs at normal schools. Another significant difference between prewar and postwar teacher education is what the Japanese characterize as an "open system of licensing," whereby

anyone who completes specialized study and a professional program at a postwar university is eligible for teacher certification. This policy is liberal and "open" in contrast to the closed prewar system of licensing. In the prewar period, teacher certification was largely limited to those trained at normal schools operated under direct control of the Ministry of Education. In 1949, teacher training at the normal school was replaced by broadly oriented teacher education programs offered first at 45 universities with schools of education and seven teachers colleges that included liberal arts programs.

As a consequence, teacher education became more liberal enabling not only colleges of education, but also a good many other institutions to establish programs to prepare teachers (18). By 1979 nearly 85 percent of the 444 colleges and universities and 84 percent of the 518 junior colleges were participating in teacher education (19). There are currently 65 colleges of education, 58 affiliated with national universities and seven, private institutions. Every year more than 800 institutions are graduating nearly 175,000 students with teaching certificates, accounting for 32 percent of the total college and university graduates in the nation (20). Obviously those institutions are oversupplying certified applicants for a profession that can employ only about 40,000 of them each year. Graduates of schools of education do not fare well in the face of this enlarged competition. In 1985 only 46 percent of the 31,000 graduates of schools of education could find jobs in the public schools and only 9 percent in private schools.

Overall in 1985, graduates of other institutions filled one-third of the openings at the elementary level, two-thirds at the lower secondary level, and nearly nine-tenths at the upper secondary level.

Let us now examine programs of teacher preparation. As developed by the Education Reform Committee, the paradigm of teacher preparation has three components: general education, specialized study, and professional education (21). It is quite similar to the predominant model of teacher education in the United States. Specific requirements for teacher certification are defined in detail in the Educational Certification Law, enforced throughout the nation by the Ministry of Education.

Graduates of education programs may apply for a regular or a temporary certificate, depending upon their qualifications. Regular certificates are either first-class or second-class. Regular first-class certificates require the completion of course work at a four-year college or graduate work, depending upon the level of teaching the applicant seeks certification for. Minimum legal requirements for teacher certification at four-year colleges are 124 credits earned in the requisite areas of course work (One credit consists of 15 lecture sessions per semester, each running from 45 to 50 minutes). Second-class certificates, for kindergarten, elementary, and lower secondary teachers, require 62 credits, or two years of course work.

In reality, the national colleges of education require for graduation minimum course work ranging from 124 to 159 credits for

both elementary and lower secondary education majors. Research indicates that students at those colleges usually take even more credits, averaging between 160 and 180 and even more than 200 credits in extreme cases, to obtain more than one certificate (22).

A typical four-year program for an elementary education major in a national college of education consists of 48 to 52 credits in general education, at least a fourth in the humanities, a fourth in the social sciences, and a fourth in the natural sciences; eight to 12 credits in foreign languages; and four credits in physical education. The requirements in general education for elementary majors apply to lower secondary majors as well.

A significant difference between elementary and lower secondary programs lies in the area of concentration, the latter emphasizing the field of specialty, and the former lacking such concentration. Instead the elementary program stresses professional studies, consisting of such areas as social and philosophical foundations of education, psychology of education, child psychology, moral education, practice teaching, and teaching methods. Thirty to 36 credits in professional studies are requisite for elementary majors. In addition, they must take two credits in each elementary teaching subject. In contrast, the lower secondary program typically requires 40 to 50 credits in the field of concentration and only 14 credits in professional studies, although most programs at the national colleges of education do demand between 18 and 26 credits.

A typical kindergarten program is similar to the elementary program, but demands heavy concentration on kindergarten education

as the field of specialty.

Majors in the upper secondary program also need only 14 credits in professional studies, but must have a greater concentration in specialized study. First-class teaching certificates at the high school level require a master's degree or 30 credits of graduate education. To obtain second-class certificates, students must meet the same course work requirements as applicants for first-class certificates at the lower secondary level. Minimum requirements for student teaching are only two credits, equivalent to two weeks of practice, in both secondary programs and four credits in the elementary program. National colleges of education, however, require that students engage in slightly more student teaching, an average of four to five credits in the lower secondary program.

SHORTCOMINGS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The teacher education programs just described are typical at the national institutions whose primary commitment is in part to prepare teachers. Although the model of teacher education mentioned earlier has guided teacher education since 1949, actual programs vary considerably. Particularly since 1954, requirements in specialized subject areas have increased, while requirements in the professional component have decreased, causing many to ask whether teacher education is adequate professional preparation (23).

As already pointed out, the minimum requirement for certifying lower and upper secondary teachers is only 14 credits in professional studies, including two credits for student teaching. Students seeking teacher certification at the institutions whose

primary mission is not teacher education tend to meet only that minimum requirement, which accounts for less than ten percent of their course work. Recall that these are the same students who, of late, fill two-thirds of the lower secondary jobs and nine-tenths of the secondary jobs in the public school system. Undoubtedly, such graduates have much greater depth in their special subject areas than graduates of the colleges of education, but the adequacy of their professional program is questionable. Indeed, it has been questioned persistently by the Ministry of Education, its advisory organizations, and other professional educational organizations.

As early as 1958 the Central Council of Education, an influential policy-recommending body advisory to the minister of education having broad representation from various occupational fields, raised that crucial question in its report on policies for enhancing teacher education. The report itself sprang from the Ministry's concern with what it feared to be deteriorating teacher education in the nation. The council was unambiguously critical of the postwar liberalization of teacher education, which, in its opinion, had downgraded certification standards. But the council did support and has continued to support the fundamental principles of liberalization of teacher education at the university level. It saw a generally growing practice of meeting only the minimum certification requirements and of meeting them only nominally and argued that the purpose of teacher education programs even at national universities was unclear. It pointed out that only perfunctory attention was given to student teaching and urged that

those problems be immediately remedied. Further, it stressed the pivotal importance of promoting a teacher's sense of mission--a pronounced orientation toward teaching, ubiquitously emphasized by school administrators in Japan. It urged the government to improve both pre-service and in-service education, so that "teachers may enhance teaching with a sense of mission and high motivation" (24). In the council's view, teachers in training at the time lacked this kind of devotion.

To those problems, the council proposed the creation of institutions whose purpose was to prepare exclusively teachers: a concept of teacher education analogous to pre-service training conducted at the normal school (25). As expected, the council's proposals met tenacious opposition by progressive forces, such as the Japan Pedagogical Society and the Japan Teachers Union (Nikkyoso), which deemed them regressive. They insisted on the liberal model of teacher education (26). As a result those proposals did not materialize, but they served as a benchmark for other proposals for teacher education reform in the 1960s.

Thirteen years later, in 1971, the council articulated its concern with teacher education in a most extensive report on educational reform. That report delineated critical issues and a broad scope of recommendations (27). It identified teacher education as one of the critical areas to be addressed in what the council viewed as the third great educational reform, preceded only by the Meiji and Occupation reforms. It forcefully pointed out the urgent need for improving teacher preparation, in-service education,

and re-education. This recommendation included the creation of education universities at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In 1978, after several years of heated debate, it led to the enactment of a legislative measure, with strong support of the conservative majority party, that established those universities.

It also recommended, to attract competent applicants to the teaching profession, that starting salaries for elementary and secondary teachers be raised by 30 to 40 percent above the starting salaries of other public employees. Although this specific recommendation for raising teacher salaries was legislated in a modified form in 1974, when the so-called Human Resource Procurement bill passed the National Diet, the teacher education curriculum remained basically unchanged in the 1970s. That legislation has significantly improved the economic status of teachers and made entry to teaching highly competitive. In view of that situation, the council issued another report in 1978 reiterating the critical need for a campaign to promote more rigorous teacher preparation (28).

Likewise, the Teacher Education Council, a standing advisory council in the Ministry of Education, issued reports in 1962, 1965, 1966, and 1972 recommending reforms of the teacher education curriculum and certification criteria. Those reports by and large reflected the views expressed by the Central Council of Education, including the proposals for the creation of institutions for professional preparation in teaching and internship programs.

In 1983, the Teacher Education Council made another

recommendation that became the basis of the latest bill, presented by the government to the Diet to improve teacher certification standards. The scope of changes recommended was relatively broad, aiming at upgrading teacher qualifications at all levels (29). In essence, the council proposed more rigorous requirements in both the specialized subject and the professional education components at all levels. It introduced three classes of teaching certificates to encourage graduate training for teachers: a special certificate obtainable upon the completion of course work at the master's level, a standard certificate requiring a bachelor's degree, and a temporary certificate. Although the bill was the culmination of sustained attempts by the Ministry of Education to make professional preparation in teaching more rigorous, it was defeated in the Diet in 1984. Nevertheless, as we shall see later, teacher education is again a central issue being considered by the National Council on Education Reform since its formation in the fall of 1984.

Other organizations also reviewed teacher education and its policies. Among them, the most notable are the Japanese Association of Colleges of Teacher Education; the Association of National Universities, which has a standing committee that monitors teacher preparation; and the Japan Pedagogical Association. They all address the central issues of teacher education, such as those discussed here, but, as academic organizations, the Association of National Universities and the Japan Pedagogical Association often differ with the Ministry of Education and its advisory councils. These academic organizations strongly support liberal teacher

education free from direct control of the Ministry of Education and the postwar policy that teacher education be broadly based in university education (30). Both the Japan Pedagogical Association and the Association of National Universities, for example, expressed strong reservations regarding the establishment of specialized education universities, which might advance political control of teacher education by the Ministry of Education (31). Partly because such organizations, private university associations, and the Japan Teachers Union are opposed to state control of teacher education, as practiced in the prewar period, they have been critical of policies advanced by the Ministry.

Besides curriculum and standards for professional training, which have been controversial throughout the postwar era, Japanese teacher education has other problems too. Noticeable among them is the observation of Japanese scholars that a well-integrated sequence of course work is lacking (32). These observations suggest that teacher education is fragmented because the three components of the teacher education curriculum are not cogently integrated.. Moreover, in trying to obtain more than one certificate, students are inclined to take too many courses at the cost of depth and rigor in the area of specialization. Another problem, perhaps more fundamental, is related to a debate among Japanese scholars regarding education as a discipline. According to them, education has not yet developed into a discipline, as the natural and social sciences have--a quite familiar observation also made in the United States. College educators and researchers have not yet coherently

defined the field of study unique to education. This is in part a source of what is seen as fragmentation in teacher education.

ENTRY INTO TEACHING

In 1985, 37.4 percent of the 38,239 available positions in the nation's public schools were filled by applicants having bachelor's degrees from colleges of education, and another 53.4 percent were won by applicants with the same degree from academically based universities. Only 3.3 percent were filled by master's degree holders, and 5.9 percent were taken by junior college graduates. These statistics reveal a pattern of employment that has developed over the past decade. Notable in this pattern is that 9 out of 10 new entrants are four-year-college graduates and that replacements in the teaching profession are dominated by non-education university graduates.

This pattern suggests several characteristics of Japan's teaching profession. First, Japan has a broad array of human resources to meet education's demands. Second, entrants with graduate degrees still constitute a small fraction in Japan's system. And third, employment opportunities as elementary and secondary teachers have diminished for junior college graduates with second-class certificates; better qualified applicants overshadow them in the competition for the limited numbers of positions. Despite those recent changes, the public schools still have significant numbers of older teachers who have had two or fewer years of college-level preparation. In 1983-84, for example, approximately 41 percent of elementary school teachers, 24 percent

of lower secondary teachers, and 11 percent of upper secondary teachers had not obtained bachelor's degrees. In contrast, in the United States in 1980, 99.6 percent of all teachers had at least a bachelor's degree; 56, 47, and 45 percent of high school, junior high and middle school, and elementary teachers, respectively, held at least a master's degree (33).

Competition for entry to the teaching profession intensified as early as 1974, when the Human Resource Procurement bill became law, and reached its peak in 1979. That legislative measure, coupled with the depressing effects of the oil crisis of 1973 upon industry, led to a dramatic rise in the number of applicants for teaching positions. For example, the total number of applicants who actually took appointment examinations nearly doubled, from 128,000 in 1974 to 245,000 in 1979, although the number of positions increased by only 13.5 percent. The competition has slightly declined since 1979, but the prefectural boards of education still enjoy a fivefold oversupply of teacher applicants.

The relative quality of teacher applicants, however, is very hard to determine in Japan. Because they graduate from broadly diversified schools, significant variations in their intellectual quality are only to be expected. Recall again here that most recent entrants to the profession at both the lower and upper secondary levels earned their degrees in specializations other than education. Japan has no established criteria with which to compare their intellectual and technical competence to that of those who enter different occupations. What can be generalized, however, is that

the quality of teacher applicants cannot be judged in terms of the intellectual quality of students at the colleges of education and vice versa.

Prospective teachers cannot gain entry to the teaching profession unless they pass competitive appointment examinations given once a year by each of the 47 prefectures and 10 largest municipalities. Graduation from a university with a teaching certificate is not sufficient for appointment, no matter how good one's academic course work may have been. Japan's meritocracy operates in determining entry to the profession. Once applicants gain entry, they enjoy lifetime employment and are promoted on the basis of seniority, as in all other parts of the public sector and in private industry. Dismissals are very few; teachers can be dismissed only for extraordinarily unethical conduct.

However, as in industry individual-centered meritocratic principles no longer operate after entry into the professional group. Partly because of its commitment to the practice of lifetime employment, each board of education of the 57 prefectures and municipalities carefully selects teacher applicants.

Given the intense competition in appointment examinations, passing them has become a primary goal of aspiring teachers, just as passing university entrance examinations is the overriding concern of high school students. Applicants need to concentrate on preparing for the examinations before taking them. Appointment examinations provide opportunities for all applicants--education majors and others--to compete universally and equally. The aim of

the examinations is to select the best qualified applicants from the competitive pool where achievement is a major criterion. They are given in two stages. The first stage consists of written tests in general education, and specialized fields and skill tests in such areas as physical education, music, art, and English conversation. All teacher applicants for lower secondary jobs are required to take a test of physical fitness. The second stage consists of interviews. In cities and prefectures that have a concentration of burakumin, a Japanese minority, dowa education (34), literally translated as assimilation education, is a required examination subject.

It is relevant to point out that age is a criterion in Japan that determines an applicant's qualification for appointment examinations. More than half of the 47 prefectures require that applicants be under the age of 30; only two prefectures have no age limit. Although this practice is much more liberal than that of industry, there is similarity between the two. Large corporations in Japan recruit new university and high school graduates almost exclusively.

IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

More than two-thirds of the teachers who responded to a 1978 survey indicated that their professional preparation was inadequate (35). The survey probably reflects the shortcomings of teacher education pointed out earlier. Moreover prefectural and local boards of education are all dissatisfied with today's teacher education (36). In view of these problems of teacher education, the

importance of in-service education looms large.

There are five types of in-service education in Japan (37). The first is the program given at an education center; the second, the in-house workshop, konai kenshu conducted under the guidance of shido shuji, an instructional supervisor appointed by the superintendent of schools; the third, the program given to administrators by the Ministry of Education at a national training center, such as Tsukuba; the fourth, the informal in-service workshop promoted by teachers themselves through participating in district-wide study groups regularly organized to improve teaching competence. Although the last type of activity tends to be limited to active teachers, it is widespread and popular in Japan. In addition, two-year full-time advanced education is given to teachers selected from all over the country at three nationally funded institutions (Hyogo, Joetsu, and Naruto Education Universities), earlier referred to as education universities, established since 1978 for the express purpose of providing graduate professional education to active teachers. These graduate institutions were created because graduate schools in Japan failed to offer advanced professional studies to working teachers. The teachers who complete this program receive a master's degree and return to school. These three institutions, however, graduate only several hundred students each year and have a very limited effect at present upon the teaching profession. The most widespread in-service education in Japan combines the first and second types and coordinates them to complement each other.

We shall look here at a typical education center. Hiroshima Municipal Center is financed by the municipal board of education and staffed by 28 full-time specialists, including five administrators. They are mainly recruited from a pool of the city's experienced, competent teachers, who take leaves from their schools and are appointed as shido shuji. The center offers 159 separate sessions in 21 different categories, each of which lasts from one to five days. These categories include subject areas from kindergarten through high school, teaching methodology, school administration, educational technology, student guidance, class management, and the like. Instructors include shido shuji at the center and corporate managers, as guest speakers.

The Ministry of Education requires first-year teachers to receive in-service education for a minimum of 20 days. They undergo training for three days at the center and participate in a three-day, intensive retreat elsewhere. They also participate in in-house workshop for 14 days, under the supervision of municipal shido shuji. For example, participants regularly conduct demonstration classes before their colleagues and a shido shuji, followed by feedback sessions. Teachers, including the first-year teachers, also participate in city-wide study group meetings organized to discuss a variety of concerns, including teaching methods and curriculum. Sixth-year teachers spend three days at the center for professional enrichment. There is also a program for administrators, including department chairpersons, assistant principals, and principals. Emphasis is on first-year principals.

Administrators are expected to participate in in-service workshops for four to eight days a year. A typical training session consists of lectures, discussion, and case studies.

In addition to these programs, the center offers a six-month program for six selected teachers, who work full-time on special projects that they choose, and a three-month program for 22 additional teachers. The latter are granted released time from their respective schools to work on their projects.

In-service education in Hiroshima City is typical, as stated, although some variations exist. Some prefectural centers provide in-service education to 10th, 15th, and 20th year teachers as well.

It is relevant to note that the staff members who provide in-service programs are mainly shido shuji, experienced teachers and principals including a few university professors. Research suggests that both educational administrators and teachers do not consider university professors particularly useful in in-service education because they are unfamiliar with teaching and administrative practices (38). For their part, education professors question the approach of experienced teachers and administrators in retraining practitioners, thus creating a separation between practitioners and the professors who taught them. There appears to be deep mutual distrust that sustains the perennial question of the proper role of institutions of teacher education in the professional development of teachers.

It is also relevant to point out that the prefectural boards of education urge teachers to use their in-service enrichment programs

to fully comprehend and master the holistic role of a teacher, so that they may develop a sense of mission, or shimeikan. The boards' concern lies in the Japanese cultural notion that schooling is not merely a process of cognitive transmission, but a process of developing morality and character.

All in all, in-service education at education centers and individual schools are actively promoted, and they are producing successful results. The same survey cited above suggests that two-thirds of first-year participants consider their in-service education useful (39). In the view of the administrators of in-service education, however, the programs are far from adequate. According to its director, the Education Center for Hiroshima, for example, needs more funding to offer better programs, and teachers, especially first-year teachers, need more released time at the center (40).

Under the active guidance of the Ministry of Education, prefectural and municipal boards of education offer in-service education for public school teachers at all levels. Programs for these teachers are mainly offered at the education center, which promotes, besides in-service education, educational research and counseling and guidance services. Each of the 47 prefectures and 10 municipalities has an education center that offers in-service workshops, at various stages of a teacher's career, throughout the year.

TEACHER ROLES: CULTURAL EXPECTATION

To appreciate the needs for reforming teacher education as

articulated by reformers in the 1980s, we must discuss the cultural expectations of teacher roles in Japan. Teachers' roles are shaped by the society's cultural expectations of teachers. They differ from the roles of American teachers, just as Japanese and American cultures display notably contrasting features. Although Japanese education has been significantly influenced by American education since the Meiji Restoration, the roles of teachers in Japan remain distinctive to the present day. That simply reveals the powerful influence of Japanese culture upon the premises and patterns of educational practice.

Culture provides a general design for life, a covert rationale that guides human behavior. Members of a culture are usually not conscious of its force, although it gives a direction to their actions and shapes their behavioral and attitudinal patterns. Culture can be compared to the grammar that members of a group follow unconsciously to communicate with each other. It exerts a powerful and ubiquitous influence on the ways individual members act to solve their problems. The importance of culture needs to be pointed out here to appreciate Japanese teachers' roles.

Viewed from this perspective, schooling in Japan is a unique cultural process in which moral and expressive activities are universally enunciated from preschool through high school, and teachers are expected to enhance them actively regardless of age grades (41). These activities include character development, moral sensitivity, and habit formation promoted through ritualism and collective activities in the context of shudan seikatsu, the

Japanese term referring to group life or group activities (42).

As alluded to at the outset, unlike American teachers, Japanese teachers are generally expected to play diffuse roles rather than role-specific functions narrowly defined within a structure of specializations, so that they may inclusively enhance moral, expressive, and instrumental aspects of student activities in the school setting. That expectation emphasizes the convergence of the public and private domains of student life. Teachers' roles in Japan are commonly defined in this framework of expectations relative to all levels of schooling, although there is a greater degree of specialization at the higher levels, thus reducing the extent to which teachers inclusively give attention to various aspects of student life.

The centrality of moral education and the emphasis on forming sound habits define the scope of teachers' responsibilities. The courses of study for both elementary and lower secondary schools state identically:

> It should be a basic principle that moral education in the school be provided throughout all the educational activities of the school. Therefore, proper instruction for moral development should be given not only in the hours for Moral Education, but also in the hours for each Subject and Special Activities, in conformity with their respective characteristics. In carrying out moral education at school, due consideration should be given to establishing closer human relationships between teachers and students and among students themselves, and to guiding thoroughly the practice of moral codes in the basic behavior of everyday life in cooperation with the home and the local community concerned (43).

The same purpose of moral education is stated in the high school course of study, though moral education in the high school is not a formal instructional area as such.

Moral education is one of only three prominent areas in the course of study at the compulsory level, the others being curriculum and special activities. It is offered as an independent area of instruction and is also diffusely and less formally promoted throughout such diverse aspects of schooling as class management, student guidance, and other dimensions of special activities. In this sense, moral education and teachers' efforts to promote sound habits are closely related aspects of schooling.

As mentioned earlier, central to moral education in Japanese schools is character development, which is assumed to accompany the acquisition of proper habits concerning such attitudinal and behavioral characteristics as regularity, orderliness, cooperation, self-discipline, persistence, and respectfulness. Research reveals that acquiring such habits is accomplished through shudan seikatsu, as group activities, and it begins at the preschool level, where teachers start to stress the conscious development of group activities (44). Teachers deliberately and energetically guide children to internalize the pronounced cultural premise in schooling that each person is a member of a group. What is often referred to as "group consciousness" in Japan is consistently stressed through the high school years (45).

Development of proper habits is also a primary concern in class management and student guidance, and it engages teachers extensively at the elementary and lower secondary levels. Class management, as practiced in the Japanese school, refers to the managerial efforts of a teacher to establish a class environment

conducive to effective learning and teaching. Such an environment is characterized by the patterning of attitudes and behavior contributing to order, cooperation, and concentration in the learning process.

Student guidance, however, as the term is used in Japan, refers to the inclusive guidance provided to students that encompasses a gamut of problems, including student habits and academic, social, and personal problems. In the Japanese school system, there are no guidance and counseling specialists, as in the United States. Student guidance is ordinarily provided by a tannin, a teacher assigned to a particular class at a particular level. The teacher is responsible for teaching, class management, and student guidance. As tannins are expected to deal with academic and extra-academic problems of their classes, they are able to see students in a holistic frame of reference and can serve as active agents for motivating students to academic work (46).

Student guidance and part of class management are vital elements of special activities, which also include student activities, such as classroom assembly and club activities; school events, including ceremonial events, cultural performances, sports events, excursions, camping, events related to health and safety, and activities involving work and production; and "class guidance," a primary function of student guidance. Japanese teachers are expected to involve themselves in these activities energetically.

Every school bulletin carefully describes in detail student activities, plans for school events, and student guidance.

Moreover, under the guidance of the Ministry of Education, local school districts promote a campaign to build "fundamental habits" conducive to school work and active student life. The student-guidance-related efforts that teachers promote in the elementary and lower secondary schools include a variety of ritualized activities, such as morning and afternoon meetings of students conducted in every classroom, daily cleaning, excursions, camping, teachers' home visitations, and athletic meetings. Similar activities go on at the upper secondary level, but generally high school teachers tend to consider student guidance less important, their central concern being markedly restricted to academic instruction (47).

Yet high schools in Japan by no means ignore student guidance, which, in their view, is still vital to establish order and foster an orientation conducive to effective shudan seikatsu. For example, a high school in Hiroshima organizes a camping trip for nearly 500 sophomores every year as a way to induct them into the culture of the school. This camping program, which lasts for three full days, involves many students, many teachers, and some community volunteers and requires careful preparation. The principal suggests that the sophomores' camping experience is their most important orientation to the school. According to him, it provides an opportunity for students to learn the basic premises and rules underlying disciplined behavior and the attitudes needed for group life and work at the school. This type of extracurricular program is common from the fifth grade on, and one can readily see that its

success depends on the active participation of dedicated teachers (48).

The emphasis on character development, moral sensitivity, and habit building displays a ubiquitous cultural quality not unique to the school environment, but rather common too in other institutional settings, such as industrial training (49). In Japan, teachers regard disciplined habits as a foundation for diligent school work. The uniqueness of Japanese teachers lies in their approach to the basic social structure of student life upon which teaching and learning are based.

PROPOSALS TO REFORM TEACHER EDUCATION

At the outset of this chapter I noted that Japanese teachers are subject to frequent criticism as a result of the deep-seated cultural expectations of society toward teachers. Even the latest educational reform proposals address teachers' shortcomings. The National Council on Educational Reform (NCER) was charged with the task of recommending a comprehensive educational reform. NCER had a three-year mandate to study major problems in education and complete recommendations, which it presented in four separate reports submitted to the prime minister in 1985, 1986, and 1987. Unlike the Central Council of Education, which received little political support for its proposals for educational reform in 1971, the recent national council received unparalleled backing from the prime minister, who made educational reform a political priority (50), and from the majority Liberal Democratic Party. It should be noted, however, that there are a number of similar recommendations

in the reports of the NCER and the Central Council. Both bodies addressed a broad range of problems, including the quality of teachers and teacher education. In fact, the basic conceptual framework of NCER's recommendations had already been anticipated and delineated by the Central Council of Education in 1971.

Reviewing the pertinent literature suggests that two factors are most significant in the current reform movement. One is economic, the other social, but both are integral to the political concerns of the Japanese government (51). From the Meiji period through the 1960s, the West had served as a paradigm of Japanese modernization for nearly a century, but now Japan's achievements are outstripping those of its models. Japan's long-standing fixation with the West as the source of all things modern has been changed in the past decade or so. Japan is seeking a new development paradigm to advance its economy and technology. Reforming education is, in significant part, governed by this consideration.

With respect to social factors, NCER points out pathological conditions in society, characterized by the weakening of the traditional moral structure and values and the rise of deviant behavior (52). The council is keenly aware that Japanese education suffers from uniformity and rigidity created when schooling was considered a central instrument for development dictated by the "catch-up ideology" (53). Thus, "most important in the educational reform to come," declares the council, "is to do away with the uniformity, rigidity, closedness and lack of internationalism, all of which are deep-rooted defects of our educational system..."

(54). In the reformers' view, the uniformity and rigidity of Japanese education have, in an important measure, contributed to the present undesirable state of schooling.

In its first report, NCER describes the conditions of schooling as "extremely critical and grievous" (55). Those conditions are pathological and characterized by excessive competition in entrance examinations, bullying, school violence, juvenile delinquency, and refusal to attend school. Japanese education is said to suffer of late from a "grave state of desolation" illustrated by those conditions in society and schools (56). NCER's emotionally charged indictment of education is directed in part toward what it regards to be mediocre teachers who lack "a sense of mission" and the "ability to guide" students and who are insensitive to parental and community needs (57). NCER also attributes those conditions to an inadequacy in teaching moral education (58). As a result, "there has been increasing public criticism expressing distrust of our schools, teachers and the education sector as a whole" (59). "Irresponsible attitudes among teachers," the council argues, have contributed to the rapid decrease in public confidence in schools and teachers (60). Such a critical commentary on teachers points to the perception that Japanese teachers have failed to meet the deep-seated cultural expectations of the teaching profession discussed earlier.

To redress those shortcomings, NCER proposes reforms in teacher pre-service and in-service education, the teacher-appointment system, teacher evaluation, teacher certification, and student

teaching. Those proposals are outlined largely in NCER's second report. The fourth and final report merely summarized them, and the third report made no reference to teacher education. The centerpiece of NCER's proposal to improve professional education for teachers is an internship program for all neophyte teachers across the nation. According to this proposal, all beginning teachers will be appointed conditionally, and will serve in schools under the guidance of supervising teachers for one year before being considered for permanent employment. The purpose of internship is to "gain the practical ability to teach and a sense of mission" (61).

This internship program, the council says, will give prefectural boards of education, which appoint public school teachers, the opportunity to evaluate teacher trainees during the trial year. This kind of selection mechanism does not exist in the present system, under which, incidentally, neophyte teachers receive conditional appointments for a half-year and then gain permanent appointments. Customarily once applicants gain entry into the teaching profession, they are assured of lifetime employment. Dismissals are very rare and occur only for unethical conduct. Similar proposals have surfaced repeatedly in the past, but for lack of popular and legislative support have failed. It has been proposed that neophyte teachers' internship involve participation in in-service education programs and research projects at education centers. The report further points out the need for improving other types of in-service education discussed earlier, as well as graduate

study in education. It proposes that opportunities for much more systematic professional development be given on a cyclical basis than currently exist in present in-service education. To enrich evry teacher's career will require greater coordination and commitment among schools, education centers, and boards of education. Relative to graduate study, NCER recommends that existing master's programs be reconceptualized so as to meet more effectively the needs of in-service education. It also calls for much more active utilization of the new education universities for long-term in-service education.

Further, the council wants to relax the present rigid teacher certification requirements, to better attract competent individuals from other fields and occupations. Accordingly, it has proposed modifications in both the certification process and the appointment examinations. In addition, it has urged that teacher education curricula be restructured to meet more effectively emerging needs and problems of children and society. NCER fails, however, to delineate the new teacher education curriculum that it advocates, although it does insist that student teaching be made a more rigorous preparation for teaching.

Other NCER recommendations lack the specificity needed to be able to render a sound judgment of their merits. It is, however, quite clear that NCER places great importance on internship and more liberalized certification requirements.

It is significant to note that the NCER's emphasis on internships reflects Japanese industry's view of training human

resources. It is also interesting to contrast Japanese and U.S. reform efforts designed to improve teacher quality. The central thrust of American reform proposals is to upgrade pre-service education as illustrated by the rhetoric of both Holmes Group and the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (62). In contrast, Japanese reformers are focusing on internships and better in-service education to improve teacher competence. To summarize, Japanese teachers are expected to play more inclusive roles than American teachers. It is that cultural expectation that defines teacher competence, and the proposal for internships is grounded in that cultural expectation. This internship program has already been introduced on a small scale and is likely to be implemented nationwide.

Reformers are attempting to enlarge the pool of applicants for teaching by broadening current certification regulations to attract talented individuals from the entire spectrum of academic and occupational fields. This is their approach to meeting the diversified needs of the future and preparing Japanese education for the twenty-first century.

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